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A/N

The current cover is not mine! It was drawn and is rightfully owned by Mizu-no-Akira on Deviant Art. I will be holding a contest for the cover, though!
The cover must include:
Bloodlust (aka Atlas)
The title of my book (Enemies)
My username (UnicornBurrito)
The artist's name (optional, please have it in smaller print though cuz I want a cover not a bunch of words)
YOU must make it. No tracing, copying, or editing other people's works!
And yes, I will make an AN chapter congratulating the cover contest winner. :3

Prologue

I cowered up against the alley. "Please, Barry- I didn't mean to, I'm s-sorry!" I pleaded, my meows high and squeaky. My brother now had me cornered, towering over me and practically radiating hatred.

"Enough, Atlas! You ate my kill! *My* kill! And now you have to pay!" He growled, and swatted at me, sinking his claws into my cheek. I let out a pained cry, but he didn't stop there. The brown tom sunk his claws into my haunch. Blood drizzling down my black pelt. I looked at him with pleading eyes.

"I promise I-I won't eat your food anymore! I was just so hungry!" I wailed as he hit me again, this time the needles bearing into my ear. Tears streamed down my cheeks, mingling with the blood.

Barry drew his paw back to scratch me again when there was a flash of silver and he was pushed to the ground. A silver tabby she cat was wresting with Barry, and she was winning.

"M-Melody!" My heart leapt. Melody was my best friend, and she was always there for me, even when my brother and father were hurting me. Barry yowled and dashed away from under her, blood dripping from his muzzle. Melody approached me carefully with her kind blue eyes.

"Are you okay, Atlas?" She asked. I could see tears welling up in her eyes too. I shook my head. My vision was blurry, I couldn't see through the blood coming from my ear. Melody nuzzled me, and I buried my muzzle in her fur, mewling pathetically.

"B-Barry was t-trying to kill me! F-for eating a-a mouse!" I wailed, and Melody drew me closer. This is why she is my best friend. She didn't care if I was being pitiful. She always had my back, no matter what.

"*Atlas*!" I heard a booming voice. *Oh no*. My dad. He was going to

kill me for sure, and probably Melody as well. We shared a terrified look and darted down the alley, up a metal staircase and onto the very top of a brick building. There was no way my dad would find us here, this was our favorite spot and the city was so grimy he wouldn't be able to track our scent.

"Atlas, one day, everything is going to change. You are going to be powerful and Barry and your father will be begging for you to forgive them. I promise that." Melody meowed. I sighed.

"I appreciate the optimism, Melody, but I will always be a runt. A nobody. A little mewling weakling who can't even stand up for himself." I meowed softly, turning away. I felt her tail brush my good cheek, trying to make me feel better.

Little did I know that Melody was right. Only it was a little different than she envisioned it.

1. You're A Bully

I woke up to another sharp pain in my haunch. I growled when I saw Barry with a devilish grin on his face.

"Hey, Runt. Dad wants to talk to you." He meowed. I grunted and stood up to lick the scratch in my hind leg.

"Let me correct that," Barry sneered. "*Dad's gonna kill you,"* He meowed in a sing song voice. I hissed and swatted at him with sheathed claws, knowing that if I had my claws out I really *would* be killed by dad. Barry hissed at me but before he could retaliate I was gone, running down the alley to find father.

"Runt. Get over here." My father hissed when he heard my pawsteps. My ears went back but I did as told. "You are a sorry excuse for a son. Why didn't you get here sooner?"

"Barry was telling me somethi-" I started, but was interrupted by claws slamming into the side of my head.

"I didn't tell you to speak!" Father growled. I winced and stopped talking. "Now, I heard that you attacked Barry again. And failed to even make him bleed. Why are you so useless, runt?!" The scar ridden tom hissed. "You are my son! You should be big and powerful, with many battlescars, like Barry. But you a useless piece of dog dung. A runt. A nobody."

I looked at the ground silently. This was my father. A brown tabby tom, covered in scars and bald spots that never grew back. One of his eyes were glazed over with white, he lost his sight in that eye in a territory fight. He was ruthless, tough as a rock, and a... Bully. *He's a bully. All he is is a bully. And so is Barry.* I remember Melody telling me when we were kittens.

"You're a bully..." I whispered. I hear my father stand, his shadow blocking the morning light from my view. "What did you say, *Runt?"* He spat.

"You're a bully!" I hissed. *You don't have to take this. Stand up to him.* Melody told me that, too. I stood and looked at my father, who towered over me, straight in the eye. His hackles were raised and I could tell he was furious.

"Say that again, I dare you!" He snarled.

"You are a bully! You fight cats for fun! You have called me a disgusting, pitiful, useless, piece of dog dung for over a year!" I spat. "And I thought you were right! But now I know, all you are is a mean, heartless, revolting *bully*!" I glared.

My hackles were raised and adrenaline was pulsing through my veins. We stared eachother down for what seemed like years, even though it was only a few seconds. A giant, scar covered brown tabby and a tiny black tom with a gray tail tip facing eachother off. Harsh blue eyes glaring at detirmined golden ones.

"Go away." Dad hissed. I blinked for a second, trying to register this phrase.

"W-what?" I stuttered, and realized how dumb I sounded.

"*Go away and never come back, runt."* He repeated. My heart skipped a beat. Did he just say...?

"I said leave!" Dad growled and gave me a warning cuff on the ear. Without another seconds hesitation, I bolted.

2. You've Made an Enemy, Runt

I ran and ran down alleys and across roads, almost getting crushed by cars twice. I bounded up a silver can, onto a big disgusting box filled with human trash, and onto a window sill. Melody was on the other side of the glass, her eyes gleaming with happiness to see me.

"Wait one second!" She meowed through the glass, her voice muffled. She bounded away and I heard a swishing noise as she left her human's den. I jump back down to meet her on the ground.

"What are you doing here so early? You should be trash picking right now." Melody whispered, scared that my father might come around the corner boiling mad that I wasn't finding food.

"I will never have to trash pick for my horrible father ever again, Melody." I purred. She blinked at me, just as I had earlier.

"What?" She asked, her tail flicking around.

"You heard me. I'm *free*, Melody. I don't have to worry anymore." I was beaming now. I couldn't handle how happy I was. I might explode. Can a cat explode from pure joy? *No Atlas, focus!* I reminded myself. Being in my own little world, I completely tuned out Melody for a moment. She was completely freaking out.

"-can't believe that you, Atlas, the runt, the underdog, actually finally did it! How did this even happen?" Melody demanded. I thought for a second.

"I guess I just got sick of it all." I meowed softly. Then I explained everything that happened. When I finished, Melody gave me a great big hug.

"You did it, Atlas. You're free." She meowed in my ear. I felt another wave of joy wash over me, and I felt on top of the world. Until I heard it.

"Hello, Runt." Barry meowed from the end of the alley. Melody stopped hugging me and stood in front of me protectively.

"Leave Atlas alone, Barry." She growled. Barry's tail swished in annoyance. He was probably judging whether it was worth it to attack me, and get beat up by Melody again.

"No." I meowed, pushing Melody away from in front of me. "I can handle myself now." I brushed my tail across her side to reassure her. She looked very conflicted for a moment, but backed off to watch the scene unfold.

"Heard you aren't my brother anymore. Been banished by father." Barry meowed, his disgusting evil grin spread across his face.

"That's right, brother. Who're you going to beat up now?" I hissed. Barry padded closer to me. Way too close. Our noses were touching, and I could smell his horrible breath.

"How," he meowed slowly, pressing his paws over mine, "about," he snarled, putting all his weight into my paws. I cringed in pain. He was *heavy*. "your little *friend*?" He finished, sinking his claws into my little paws. I yelped and stood on my haunches, trying to take the pressure off my paws. In that time, Barry had sunken his claws into Melody's side, and that's when I snap.

"Leave Melody alone!" I growl and pounce onto Barry. This was most likely the thing he'd least expected to happen, because he went toppling to the ground.

Once again, adrenaline was rushing through me. That beautiful adrenaline. With that adrenaline, I am powerful. i can do anything. And that's what I do.

"You cannot hurt Melody." I hiss in his ear as I rake my claws down his side. He makes a pained noise and cringes. When he opens his eyes again, his green-yellow eyes show one thing.

Not hatred.

Not pain.

But fear.

Barry was fearful. Of me. It was thrilling, but kind of terrifying. Barry, the enemy, was scared of the little runt that he picked on for so many years. Before I know what I was doing, I got off of him. Immediately the tom sprang to his paws, his fur bristled and he looked like a big puff of fuzz.

"What are you doing?" He squeaked. I glared at him.

"Letting you have a chance. I'm not like you, Barry. Now go." I spat the words like I just ate something rotten. Barry retreated down to the edge of the alley, but turned to tell me five words.

"You've made an enemy, runt." He hissed and darted away from the alley.

3. Finally Free

I wasn't really shaken by Barry's words. We were enemies from the start. Melody looked appalled though.

"You did it." she whispered, a small smile creeping onto her face. I purred and nuzzled her.

"Yes I did." I meowed. She purred back and stepped back to look at me. I don't know if I looked different, but I definitely feel different. Stronger. Better. I also looked down at myself. My paws were bloody. My black fur, as usual, matted and grimy from trash picking.

"Your paws," Melody meowed, noticing the blood on them. I bent down and licked the blood off my claws. The metallic taste was... Delightful. Intrigued but slightly disgusted by this, I shook my head to clear my thoughts and licked Melody's cheek.

"I'm free, Melody. Finally free." I meowed. She twined her tail with mine.

"What do you want to do, now that we're free to do whatever we want?" She asked with a big smile. I shook my head.

"I have no idea!" I laughed and jumped up and down like a hyper kitten. Melody was just as excited, also jumping.

"Then let's do everything!" She giggled and bounded down the alley, her paws making soft noises against the asphalt. I laughed and pounced after her.

"Where are we going?" I meowed as we weaved between human legs, causing angry shouts in human gibberish.

"I went to this place a few months ago. Humans take cats and clean us and brush our fur. It's amazing. They also clean wounds, and judging by that matted blood on your haunch, you need it!" Melody

purred.

I love Melody, but humans that take strays and clean them? That's impossible. They hate street cats!

"Melody?" I asked a little quietly as we pushed through crowds of humans. "Are you sure about this? Humans hate cats like me,"

"Atlas don't be silly! They'll love you! You're a cute little-" Melody stopped in the middle of her sentence.

Little. I hate that word. Yes, I am small. I am, in fact, a runt. But that word is what have dad and Barry the excuse to bully me.

"Atlas, I'm so sorry, I didn't mean it that way!" Melody squeaked, and I realized I'd stopped walking and was flexing my claws angrily. I retracted my claws and smiled a fake smile at Melody.

"It's alright. I know you mean no harm." I meowed and brushed my tail over her shoulder to reassure her. Her face relaxed in relief and she licked my muzzle before starting of again.

"You're the best. Now we're almost here. But be careful, I've seen some of the cats that your father's gotten into fights with. They might try to get to you, but we can just introduce them to our claws, right?" Melody mewed.

Sometimes Melody talks too much, I think to myself.

"Yeah. Our claws," I meow, trying not to roll my eyes at my friend. I nearly trip over her when she stops. "Mels!" I mew in surprise.

"Sorry! Sorry! But we're here!" She says and flicks her tail towards a large tented area with humans cleaning and brushing cats and... Dogs... I feel my fur begin to bristle at the sight of those giant slobbery beasts, their tongues lolling out of their mouths as the humans douse them in water.

"*Dogs*, Melody? *Really?"* I hiss into her ear, my hackles already up in alarm. You may think this is stupidly cliche, a cat mindlessly hating dogs. But I have a reason. You see, runts are usually only born runts because there were so many in their litter that they couldn't develop

as much as their siblings.

That's right, it wasn't just me and Barry. I had another brother and a sister. And a dog killed them both.

"Relax, Atlas. They keep the cats separated from the dogs." Melody assured me. I sucked in a deep breath and nodded.

"Okay,"

"Good." Melody smiled and started meowing to get a human's attention. A human eventually noticed us and I was quickly picked up, much to my discomfort. The human cooed at me and stroked my fur, which... I guess it wasn't *that* bad... Until I was plopped into water.

"Gaaaahhh!" I yowl. "Cats are not meant for this! I can bathe myself! Stupid human you're humiliating me!" *I swear all the others are laughing at me.* "Melody stop laughing!" I whine. Melody was giggling like a fool as she *let* a human soak her to the bone. But she looked hilarious, all wet with her fur no longer fluffy.

"Melody! You look ridiculous!" I laugh as the human massages bubbly stuff into my fur. *I smell freaking amazing.*

"You look even sillier!" Melody argued and splashed water in my direction. *Oh no she didn't.*

"Oh yeah?" I meow and send a spray of water at her, earning me a yell of surprise from the grooming human. We start an all out water fight that even a few other alley cats joined in on, screaming things like "dog-brain!" and "Fish breath!" at either jokingly. We got so out of control that the humans had to drag us out of the water and wrap us in cloth.

"I win smelly-face!" I tell Melody, who scoffs.

"No way, dumpster trash!" Melody says with a roll of her bright blue eyes. I was about to reply when heaven struck.